



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 106th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 145

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1999

No. 129

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NUSSLE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 29, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM NUSSLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. John H. White, President of Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

We begin this morning with the recognition that You, O God, are the source of life and the provider of all good things. We recognize that the order and prosperity of this Nation is a gift of Your providence.

I thank You for these ladies and gentlemen and those who assist them in this vital task of governing this Nation. May they recognize that their authority comes from You and that they are the servants of God and His Son, Jesus Christ, as well as servants of those who elected them.

I pray that their decisions may be founded on Your law, seasoned by Your justice and Your grace. Especially grant us all a full measure of Your wisdom this day.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DEMINT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a Joint Resolution of the House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 34. Joint resolution congratulating and commending the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1156. An act to amend provisions of law enacted by the Small Business Regulatory

Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 to ensure full analysis of potential impacts on small entities of rules proposed by certain agencies, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 249) "An Act to provide funding for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes."

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. JOHN H. WHITE, PRESIDENT OF GENEVA COLLEGE, BEAVER FALLS, PENNSYLVANIA

(Mr. KLINK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Reverend Dr. John White, the President of Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, who we had the honor of having with us to say the prayer to begin this session. Dr. White is a constituent of mine, and certainly is noted for the marvelous work he has done at Geneva College.

Geneva College was founded by the Reform Presbyterian Church of North America. It does a wonderful job in enriching the community in which it is located. It has sent many wonderful students out to do good work in this Nation.

Dr. White has been a part of that College for the last 28 years, the last 8 years of which he has been the President, and it has been my honor to work with him.

We are pleased to have someone of his stature here to assist Reverend Ford in beginning this session, and I would commend him and thank him for being here with us.

I also would commend Geneva College for 4 out of the last 5 years they have been in the national championships with their football team, and

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H8969

they have done a marvelous job of exhibiting their athletic prowess as well as their intellect and their academic prowess. So I thank Dr. White for being with us today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 one minutes on each side.

DOE IGNORES SCIENCE AT YUCCA MOUNTAIN

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, just two days ago this chamber approved, unfortunately, \$352 million for the continued development of a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, just north of Las Vegas, Nevada.

On that very same day, a public hearing on that project was held in Las Vegas, and at this hearing numerous experts testified that the Department of Energy's draft impact report ignored completely the basic principles of sound science. And, just to make matters worse, the Energy Department's impact report failed to follow the law requiring them to consider alternatives to Yucca Mountain for storing high level nuclear waste. And, by the way, it did not consider the dangers of transporting the high level nuclear waste across America to Yucca Mountain.

But these issues, by necessity, deal with sound science. Obviously the Energy Department is not interested in sound science.

It does not take a scientist, Mr. Speaker, to know that funding a nuclear waste storage project which lacks a sound scientific rationale is not only wasteful, but dangerous.

I yield back the trace of all nuclear waste across this country and the green garbage it leaves behind.

DERAILING HMO REFORM

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, after years of fighting for HMO reform, we are at the doorstep of passing meaningful patient protections. But now, just before we enact the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, the Republican leadership is trying to derail HMO reform.

The Republican leadership has offered a plan that fails to guarantee patients the right to make medical decisions with their doctors, decisions that are free from insurance company bureaucrats. Their plan also fails to hold HMOs accountable for wrong or improper decisions, and, sadly, the only reason this plan is even being offered is

to prevent meaningful HMO reform from being passed.

The bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights is a good bill. It has broad support. If we pass this bill, then all HMO patients can have the ability to choose their own doctors, guaranteed access to emergency and specialty care, the right to make health decisions with doctors only, freedom from gag rules to prevent doctors from offering care, and the ability to hold their HMOs accountable.

Let us do the right thing. We have an historic opportunity in the next couple of weeks. Let us pass the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights.

A CHALLENGE TO DEMOCRATS

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to issue a challenge to my Democratic colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I would like for someone to explain to me whether it is your view that Republicans are extremists for wanting to limit spending and exercise fiscal responsibility or is it your view that Republicans are irresponsible for not exercising this fiscal responsibility?

Fiscally irresponsible or extreme. Which is it? I have heard both charges repeatedly in the recent weeks; and I am curious to know, for those in the party that has been dedicated to expanding government for the past 40 years to tell me what is their idea of fiscal responsibility?

I am also a bit curious to know when they think the American taxpayer should get some tax relief. After all, if one cannot make the case for tax cuts now in the face of \$3 trillion budget surpluses over the next 10 years, just what would it take to convince you that tax relief is possible?

I think it is clear that the party that wishes to limit the size of the Federal Government and the party which is careful with the taxpayers' money is the real party of fiscal responsibility. So which is it? Are Republicans extreme or fiscally responsible in our desire to limit Washington spending?

PREVENTING REAL HMO REFORM

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, once again our friends in the majority continue to ignore the will of the majority of Americans who have spoken out in support of a real Patients' Bill of Rights. Instead of heeding this call, the majority has again drafted their own cynical health care bill in a last minute attempt to prevent the people's bill, the bipartisan Norwood-Dingell bill, from passing.

The Republican health care bill unveiled yesterday is not real HMO re-

form, and do not believe for one second that it expands health care coverage for uninsured Americans.

The Dingell-Norwood bill, by contrast, will put doctors and their patients back in charge of health care, increase access by making sure the insured can get the medical care they need, and makes managed care plans accountable when they decide to deny care.

We must not let the opponents of the reform all our constituents asked for succeed. Support the Dingell-Norwood consensus managed care reform act.

RAIDING THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the President wants to raise taxes and raid the Social Security trust fund to pay for new government spending. Do not just take my word for it, look at the facts. The Congressional Budget Office scored the President's budget as a net tax increase and House Democrats support that budget and the President wants to increase spending by billions of dollars, which the Congressional Budget Office also confirms breaks the very budget caps the President agreed to and took credit for in our budget agreement.

For the past 32 years Congress has raided the Social Security trust fund to pay for more government. Republicans want to put an end to that. It is time for this Congress to stop playing by the rules established by liberal Democrats in the 1960's. Seniors in my district are surprised to hear that Congress has been routinely operating in this manner. They do not understand why politicians in Washington use retirement money for anything other than retirement. It just does not seem right. It is not right. We must stop the President's raid on Social Security.

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AMERICA IS NOT GETTING PASSING GRADES

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, a new report says that 75 percent of American students cannot write a simple essay. It also says many students cannot even change a dollar bill, and many of them cannot read.

But, what is even worse, the report says these uneducated students continue to graduate. And all the experts are now looking at Congress and asking, what is Congress going to do about this?

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. This is not about Congress; this is about parents. In the old days, kids knew their ABCs before they went to school.

I yield back all the well-intended billions of taxpayer dollars that are not